

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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CONFIDENTIAL PARIS 18984

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AORG, UNESCO
SUBJECT: CONTON VISIT ISRAEL - EDUCATION IN OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES

REF: (A) PARIS 17561, (B) PARIS 18135

1. CONTON IS STILL OUT OF PARIS, HOWEVER, PERMREP HAD CONVERSATION WITH DDG FOBES RE VISIT OF CONTON JERUSALEM WITH DIRECTOR DEPT FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE GERALD BOLLA. ACCORDING TO FOBES CONTON IS MUCH ILL AT EASE FOLLOWING HIS DISCUSSIONS IN JERUSALEM. REPORTEDLY THE ISRAELIS IGNORED THE LETTER FROM UNESCO REQUESTING INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF EDUCATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND REFUSED TO FURNISH ANY. FOBES SAID IT IS CLEAR THAT ISRAEL WILL REFUSE TO GIVE ANY RECOGNITION TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTION WHICH IT CONSIDERS IMPRACTICAL AND UNREASONABLE AND INTERFERING WITH ITS RIGHTS OF ADMINISTRATION. CONTON IS, ACCORDING TO FOBES, UNCERTAIN HOW TO REPORT TO DG M'BOW, AND WHETHER THE DG WILL WANT TO STATE PUBLICLY THAT ISRAEL HAS DECLINED TO RESPOND TO THE UNESCO REQUEST TO FURNISH INFORMATION

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ON THE STATE OF EDUCATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

2. OTHER THAN ON THE SPOT FACT FINDING IT IS CLEAR THAT
CONTON'S VISIT DID NOT ACCOMPLISH MUCH.

3. AS TO THE ITEM ON THE SEPTEMBER EXBD AGENDA, FOBES
EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SINCE SO LITTLE HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISH-
ED BY WAY OF FACT FINDING THE DG WOULD NOT BE IN A
POSITION TO GIVE A FULL REPORT TO THE BOARD. THEREFORE,
HE MIGHT ONLY STATE THAT EFFORTS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION
ARE CONTINUING AND THAT SOME OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES
HAVE NOT RESPONDED. AS OF THIS DATE, FOBES SAID, SOME
OF THE ARAB STATES HAVE NOT REPLIED TO THE UNESCO LETTER
AND THERE HAS BEEN NO RESPONSE FROM THE PLO.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ISSUE
BEFORE THE SEPTEMBER BOARD. THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION
WOULD BE FOR DG M'BOW TO SIMPLY NOTE THAT EFFORTS ARE
CONTINUING AND PROPOSE NO ACTION BY THE BOARD. HOWEVER,
THE SEEDS OF TROUBLE ARE PRESENT AND CAN GET OUT OF
HAND IF CONDEMNATORY RESOLUTIONS ARE INTRODUCED OR IF
THE ARABS FEEL THEY HAVE TO MAKE A RECORD WITH THE USUAL
SPEECHES AGAINST ISRAEL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE
ISRAELIS SEEM TO BE TAKING A TOUGH LINE ON THIS ISSUE
AND IT MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR M'BOW TO KEEP THE LID ON.
FOBES WILL RECOMMEND THAT THE ISSUE BE KEPT DOWN AND
UNDER CONTROL AND IT IS QUITE LIKELY WYNTER, CHAIRMAN OF
THE BOARD WILL USE HIS INFLUENCE IN A POSITIVE WAY.
HOWEVER, IT IS TOO EARLY TO MAKE A JUDGMENT AS TO WHAT
WILL LIKELY TRANSPIRE. A CONTINUING DIALOGUE BETWEEN
UNESCO AND ISRAEL WOULD CERTAINLY BE HELPFUL.
GAMMON

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